

Meeting Summary

Feather River HCP Development Committee Meeting

February 13, 2014
1:00 – 3:00 p.m.
Bonderson Building, Room 422
901 P Street, Sacramento

Participants:

Agency/Organization	Participant
California Department of Fish and Wildlife	Kelley Barker
California Department of Water Resources, DFM	Shelly Amrhein
California Department of Water Resources, DFM	Scott Kranhold
California Department of Water Resources, DFM	Kip Young
California Department of Water Resources, FESSRO	Tony Danna
California Department of Water Resources, FESSRO	Terri Gaines
California Department of Water Resources, FESSRO	Leah McNearney
California Department of Water Resources, FESSRO	Ron Melcer (phone)
California Department of Water Resources, Hydropower License Planning and Compliance Office	Earl Nelson
California State Water Resources Control Board	Bob Solecki
Central Valley Flood Protection Board	Andrea Buckley (phone)
Central Valley Flood Protection Board	Jane Dolan (phone)
NOAA Fisheries	Mike Hendrick
NOAA Fisheries	Julie Wolford
US Fish and Wildlife Service	Jennifer Hobbs
<i>Support Staff</i>	
H.T. Harvey	Sharon Kramer (phone)
H.T. Harvey	Adam Wagschal
H.T. Harvey	Hillary White
Kearns & West	Ben Gettleman
Kearns & West	Kelsey Rugani

Meeting Summary

Welcome, Introductions and Agenda Review

Leah McNearney welcomed participants to the meeting. Ben Gettleman, facilitator, reviewed the meeting agenda and objectives. Feather River HCP Development Committee (Committee) participants introduced themselves.

Impact Analysis and Process for Developing Goals and Objectives

Adam Wagschal stated that FESSRO and H.T. Harvey are in the process of developing the Feather River HCP project description and impact analysis. He noted that identifying covered activities can be a complicated process, and that FESSRO is in the early stages of developing the impact analysis. Adam shared a draft table of covered activities and anticipated impacts, and noted that the table and definitions provided are a work in progress and will be subject to substantial revisions as they are reviewed. Adam explained that information was pulled from the Feather River Streambed Alteration Agreement, the 2012 Central Valley Flood Protection

Plan (CVFPP), and the Conservation Strategy in order to create the draft table. Adam added that FESSO is also beginning to quantify impacts for each species.

Adam stated that FESSRO is interested in receiving initial feedback from the Committee on overall impressions or “red flags” with respect to the impact analysis process to confirm that FESSRO is on the right track. He added that FESSRO would also like to receive more detailed input by March 7, 2014.

Committee members provided the following comments and questions on the draft impact analysis:

- Question (Q): Why is channel maintenance listed with a “no” with respect to riparian vegetation and removal in the draft impact analysis?
 - Response (R): That should be changed to a “yes”.
- Q: Can columns be added to the impact analysis table?
 - R: Yes, they can. This is the initial draft and FESSRO is interested in hearing feedback on the process and content.
- Q: Are the species listed in the draft impact analysis table only the covered species or all species in the region? Can this list be used to identify if the appropriate species are being covered?
 - R: The species listed in the table are the species FESSRO is considering covering. As mentioned earlier, identifying covered species and activities is iterative.

Adam then described the process for developing goals and objectives for the Feather River HCP. Adam stated that the Fish Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) has met three times and is drafting measurable goals and objectives for salmonids in the Feather River HCP planning area. He noted that the Fish TAC first looked at stressors in the region and then assessed what activities could be implemented to alleviate those stressors, and that the goals and objectives are being derived from that process. He added that a Terrestrial TAC will be established to conduct a similar goals and objectives process for terrestrial species.

Leah McNearney added that FESSRO has been working with DFM on the impact analysis and is in the process of incorporating DFM's edits.

Draft Covered Species List

Adam Wagschal provided an overview and update on the draft covered species list for the Feather River HCP. Adam shared that the list includes all of the species in the planning area where there is the potential for take. He added that as covered activities are identified, certain species might be added or removed from the list, and that identifying covered species and activities is an iterative process. Adam noted that FESSRO is requesting input from Committee members on overall impressions of the process for developing the covered species list, and if any specific species should be added or removed from the list at this point in the process.

Committee members provided the following comments and questions on the draft covered species list:

- Q: Why is white tailed kite included in the covered species list?
 - R: In working on the Conservation Strategy and looking at the riparian corridors of the planning area, white tailed kite are prevalent enough to include on the list. FESSRO is continuing discussion on the trajectory of the species and if the species might ultimately be removed from the list. FESSRO will know more after developing data sets and conducting the impact analysis.
- Q: Does FESSRO think the covered activities will impact this species?

- R: There is concern about breeding habitat disturbance.
- Q: Can FESSRO include species that are not explicitly covered but can be considered if HCP activities will benefit them? Those species should be identified in the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) processes.
 - R: Yes, those species can receive special consideration during the HCP process. When a species is covered, DWR will need to monitor and mitigate for impacts to that species, but that doesn't mean non-covered species will be ignored.

Update on Feather River Fish TAC and Terrestrial TAC

Leah provided an update on the establishment of the Terrestrial TAC. She shared a draft list of recommended participants and welcomed feedback from the Committee on specific agencies or individuals to add to the roster. Leah noted that FESSRO intends to begin convening the full group in April 2014 and that subgroups may be established to discuss specific species, as needed.

Leah shared an overview document which describes the HCP development process and the purposes of each group including the HCP Development Committee and the TACs. Leah added that a stakeholder group will also be established to inform the HCP process, and that a public workshop is planned for summer 2014 to educate the community about the HCP process and its development.

Leah explained that the HCP Development Committee represents a continuation of the work of the Interagency Advisory Committee (IAC) Regional Permitting Subcommittee and that products developed by the Committee will be shared with the IAC. Terri Gaines added that the HCP process is structured to increase meeting efficiency and to not have multiple groups addressing the same items.

Committee members had the following comments and questions on the TACs:

- Comment (C): NOAA Fisheries representatives should be added to the Terrestrial TAC.
- C: A USACE representative should be invited to participate in the HCP Development Committee.

Adam shared that the next Fish TAC meeting will likely be scheduled for late March 2014 after more progress has been made on impact analysis.

Leah shared that a separate meeting will be scheduled to discuss permitting strategies in the other four Conservation Planning Areas (CPAs).

Stakeholder Communications and Engagement

Ben Gettleman shared a timeline of anticipated communications and engagement activities for the Feather River HCP. He noted that Kearns & West and FESSRO will be conducting phone interviews and in-person meetings with key stakeholders to inform the development of a stakeholder assessment which will identify stakeholder concerns and suggestions for how to engage and educate the community throughout the Feather River HCP development process. He added that a similar assessment process was conducted to inform the Conservation Strategy communications and engagement plan.

Tony Danna described that FESSRO is in the process of compiling a stakeholder database that now has approximately 50-60 names. Tony shared that FESSRO aims to build working relationships with stakeholders and to help them understand the HCP process and its goals,

and to help determine how the process relates to their interests. Tony added that FESSRO and Kearns & West will conduct approximately 25 interviews and meetings in the next few weeks.

Terri shared that Committee members should contact FESSRO if they would like to participate in any of the meetings with stakeholders. Ben added that Committee members should contact FESSRO if they have suggestions for stakeholders to contact.

Ben noted that the Feather River stakeholder group will be established this year and that the first meeting will likely be held in May or June 2014.

Committee members provided the following comments and questions on stakeholder communications and engagement:

- Q: Will FESSRO reach out to Regional Flood Management Plan (RFMP) participants?
 - R: Yes, the RFMP leads are on the stakeholder interview list.
 - R: In addition to RFMP outreach, FESSRO will present at the February 28 Central Valley Flood Protection Board (CVFPB) meeting on the regional permitting effort. Committee members are welcome to attend.
- Q: How many stakeholders has FESSRO met with at this point?
 - R: One so far. FESSRO met with a representative of one of the Reclamation Districts (RDs) and he was optimistic about the programmatic permitting process. The stakeholder asked if FESSRO could cover internal drainages (the stormwater system).
- Q: Did the RD stakeholder understand the benefits of this process and the need for take coverage?
 - R: Generally, yes. FESSRO is also in the process of developing informational materials to make sure the benefits are clearly articulated.
- Q: Have the interviews been scheduled?
 - R: The scheduling process will begin next week.
- Q: Will the covered species list be shared with stakeholders?
 - R: Yes.
- C: It would be helpful for the resource agencies to keep one of their legal staff informed on the HCP process. If attorneys are brought in later in the process, the overall timeline could get delayed.

Ben shared that a Feather River HCP development timeline was included in the meeting packet. Adam added that the schedule will be updated to reflect the current HCP development process.

Committee members had the following comments and questions on the schedule:

- Q: How far into the CEQA process will FESSRO be when they file for a 2081 permit?
 - R: It will likely be March 2016. The HCP development process will hopefully be completed by then, except for the CEQA/NEPA process.

Next Steps

1. Feather River HCP Development Committee (Committee) members to provide comments on the draft covered species list by COB Tuesday, February 18th to Adam Wagschal (awagschal@harveyecology.com) and Leah McNearney (lmcneary@water.ca.gov).
2. Committee members to provide suggestions for Terrestrial TAC members by COB Tuesday, February 18th to Leah McNearney.
3. Committee members to provide initial comments (focusing on red flags and overall approach) on the impacts analysis document by COB Friday, February 21st to Adam Wagschal and Leah McNearney.

4. Committee members to provide more detailed comments on the impacts analysis document by COB Friday, March 7th to Adam Wagschal and Leah McNearney.
5. Adam Wagschal will develop a summary of comments submitted by Committee members on the draft species list and impacts analysis document
6. Kearns & West to add Mike Hendrick and Julie Wolford, NOAA Fisheries, to the Terrestrial TAC roster.
7. Kearns & West to add a United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) representative to the Committee roster.
8. Kearns & West to coordinate with Mark Chin to set up a folder for the Committee on the IAC portal.
9. Kearns & West to circulate meeting materials from February 13th Committee meeting and post to the IAC portal.
10. FESSRO to present on the programmatic permitting strategy to the Central Valley Flood Protection Board on Friday, February 28th. Committee members are encouraged to attend.
11. Leah will schedule a meeting with the agencies to discuss programmatic permitting for the other RFMP regions.
12. The next Feather River HCP Development Committee meeting is scheduled for Thursday, April 10th from 1:00 – 3:00pm at Bonderson Building, room 422.
13. The next Fish TAC meeting will likely take place in late March 2014
14. The first Terrestrial TAC meeting will likely take place in early April 2014.